

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

Forest Site Preparation

(Acre)

Code 490

DEFINITION

Treating areas to encourage natural seeding of desirable trees or to permit reforestation by planting or direct seeding.

PURPOSES

To prepare land for establishing a stand of trees to conserve soil and water, improve watersheds or produce wood crops.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

On understocked woodland areas or areas growing undesirable vegetation where the site potential is high for growing wood crops.

On areas recently protected from livestock grazing where the understory has a competitive growth of undesirable shrubs, grass or trees.

On open fields or critically eroding areas.

CRITERIA

None available.

CONSIDERATIONS

Water Quantity

1. Effects on the water budget components.

Water Quality

1. Effects on erosion and the movement of sediment and soluble and sediment-attached substances carried by runoff.

2. Effects of pesticides on surface and ground water quality.

3. Effects on the movement of dissolved substances to ground water.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

1. Eliminate competing vegetation by plowing, disking, hoeing or applying approved herbicides. A fall treatment to control competing vegetation in preparation for spring planting is preferred. A follow-up herbicide application in the spring, prior to planting, may be needed to control emerging competition.

2. Site preparation can be applied to the entire field, in 3-foot wide bands, or in 3-foot diameter circles where the new seedlings or seed will be planted.

3. Where there is potential for erosion, establish a temporary cover and do site preparation in bands or circles where the trees will be planted. Temporary cover will consist of annual rye, wheat, oats, red or ladino clover, or Korean lespedeza. Refer to Cover and Green Manure Crop (340) Indiana Technical Guide Standards and Specifications for seeding rates.

4. Protect all sites from livestock grazing.

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

5. In areas being re-established in Christmas trees, remove cull trees and residues. Seed the field to a small grain for a minimum of 1 year to bring insect infestations under control before replanting trees.

6. To encourage natural seeding of desirable trees in understocked woodland areas, prepare a rough seedbed by using a disc, harrow, or similar

tool to expose bare soil in September or early October prior to natural seed dispersal of hardwood species.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Operation and maintenance requirements are not applicable for this practice.